

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to the Office Action dated December 5, 2006. Claims 1-9 were presented for examination. Claims 1-3 and 6-9 have been cancelled. New claims 10 and 11 have been added.

The title of the application has been amended as provided hereinabove to better describe the scope of the invention in view of the amendments to the claims.

In the Office Action the disclosure was objected to because there appeared to be a place holder for a table on page 3 of the specification, but no actual table. The specification has been amended herein above in order to remove the place holder. The table referenced in the specification is present as pages 7, 8 and 9 of the application.

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Claims 1-3 have now been cancelled. Accordingly, this rejection is moot.

Claims 1-5 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Taniguchi et al. Claim 6 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As stated above, claims 1-3 and 6-9 have been cancelled. Claim 6 had previously been dependent on independent claim 4, and included the limitation that the process is carried out in the substantial absence of carbon monoxide. This limitation has now been added to independent claim 4. Accordingly, claim 4 is now allowable, as it includes the allowable subject matter referenced by the Examiner above.

Claim 5 is dependent on allowable claim 4, and therefore is also allowable. This claim has been amended to clarify the issue of coordination by oxygen and/or nitrogen atoms.

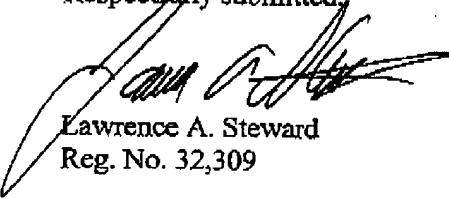
New dependent claim 10 has been added. In this claim, the class of ligands has been amended to include ligands derived from acetylacetone. This ligand [specifically in vanadyl acetylacetone, VO(acac)₂] is referred to in the article of Taniguchi but in a totally different framework (in the presence of carbon monoxide). Support for amendment is found at page 3 of the specification of the present

application, first paragraph, wherein "the vanadium (IV) complexes with vanadyl and O,O-ligands" are referenced.

New independent claim 11 claims a process carried out in the presence of carbon monoxide (previously disclosed), but using vanadium catalysts. The cited Taniguchi article describes the transformation of methane and carbon monoxide in acetic acid using vanadium catalysts. However, these catalysts are different from those referred to in new claim 11. The Abstract of the Taniguchi citation refers to the use of $\text{VO}(\text{acac})_2$, V_2O_3 , V_2O_5 , NaVO_3 , and heteropolyacids containing vanadium. In the article, special attention is given to $\text{VO}(\text{acac})_2$. The Table on the second page of the citation indicates several vanadium catalysts, but none of them is referred to in new claim 11.

Based upon the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims 4, 5, 10 and 11 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the issuance of a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes that prosecution of this application may be expedited by a telephone conversation, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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